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EDITORIAL COMMENT

THE JOURNAL AT NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

YOU are cordially invited, indeed you are urged, to visit your *Journal's* office at National Headquarters when you are in New York. The new office has been opened in order that we may be accessible to those who travel for we know that large numbers of nurses visit New York every year. Our correspondence files contain many thoughtful and interesting letters, but there is something vital and stimulating about personal interviews that even the most gifted writers find difficult to put into letters.

Your editors are always roused to greater efforts on behalf of nurses and nursing by interested and animated discussion of professional and personal problems and by face to face consideration of the aspirations and achievements of nurses. Do come in with news from your section! No state or locality has a monopoly of all that is good nor yet of all that is difficult. Everywhere there are problems incident to the development of our service to humanity. Come in and tell us what part you and your colleagues are taking in the great health programme that is such an essential part of the social needs of our times. Only by close contact and genuine understanding can we properly interpret to other groups your contribution to the welfare of the country and to the growth of our profession. Only by generous coöperation can we know the best sources of information on a multitude of questions of vital interest to others as well as to you. Your experience and

opinions may be more valuable to others than you realize. Come in and tell us!

We are amazed to find that lay people have more quickly grasped the significance of National Headquarters than have nurses and are making good use of its growing resources. Do come to see us when duty or pleasure brings you to New York. We believe we can serve you more adequately if we know you better. It is our pleasure as well as our duty to serve you, but we know that you can help us to do it better. Do come and see us!

THE AMERICAN HOSPITAL ASSOCIATION MEETING

THE exposition of hospital equipment at this convention was so comprehensive and attractively arranged that the programme really occupied a secondary place. Notwithstanding this fact, the programme possessed one feature of deep significance. An entire day was devoted to the reports of the Rockefeller Committees that have been studying nursing education, the preparation of administrators of hospitals, and that of the Committee of the Hospital Association which has been studying the preparation of medical social workers, under the chairmanship of Michael M. Davis. The conclusions of the two Rockefeller Committees, it will be recalled, were published in the August *Journal*. All three reports recognize a changing concept of the functions of these groups that is in accord with the growing importance of preventive medical work. All three, while recognizing the very real achievements of the present

generation of workers, emphasizes the necessity for providing sounder basic training and all three stress the importance of the part the universities should play in providing the fundamental education necessary. It requires no great stretch of the imagination to visualize members of the groups coming together, under university auspices for certain courses. When that day comes, the core of common knowledge and the sense of a common objective will, we believe, go far toward eliminating the misunderstandings, sometimes unfortunately jealous in character and due to the limitations of each group, that have arisen in the past.

The very general approval of these reports on the training of nurses, of hospital administrators, and of medical social workers augurs well for the future. All of these fields have come to occupy their positions of importance largely through the initiative and courage of individuals and the results are therefore very uneven. A sound basic education for special work, which allows scope for initiative, cannot fail to raise the general level of achievement in the whole effort toward "positive health."

Laura R. Logan, Chairman of the Section on Nursing, provided one of the best programmes of the meeting. The Report on Nursing Education was discussed by Amy M. Hilliard, in Relation to Its Effective Practice Upon the Hospital Nursing Department; by S. Lillian Clayton on The Use of Ward Helpers in a paper which sharply differentiates between the various possible groups of ward workers, and by Annie W. Goodrich, whose paper was entitled The Role of the Hospital Nursing Department in

a Community Health Programme. Miss Goodrich characteristically discussed her subject in its broadest possible aspects, stating at the outset that, in such a discussion, nursing could not be separated from the hospital inasmuch as any department of a hospital is to a great extent dependent upon the whole. She took the position that the family is the unit of hospital responsibility and not the individual patient, a conception that she believes requires that

the entire personnel of the institution shall experience that life within its walls that will most effectively and enduringly impress upon them the essentials in health habits for their personal life not less than for the lives they are directing or being prepared to direct.

Discussing the relation of hospitals and kindred organizations, Miss Goodrich said:

Born of philanthropy rather than coming into existence through the felt need of the members of the community whom they serve, these organizations and institutions, fine flowers as it were of a passing system which have indeed sown the seeds of the new social order, nevertheless to serve effectively, indeed to survive in a democracy, must know themselves responsible *to* the community, not *for* the community whom they serve. Their roots today must be sunk deep in *conscious community ownership* in order that they may receive the support—moral and financial—for effective functioning.

In summing up the preparation necessary for nurses, Miss Goodrich stressed the importance of a fundamental body of knowledge of science of college grade upon which to superimpose the training obtainable in a hospital providing experience in caring for the diseases now prevalent, including mental and tuberculosis.

The papers were followed by discussion from the floor which was of an unusually broad-minded, tolerant nature

indicative of real desire to come together on a basis of mutual understanding.

CORRESPONDENCE COURSES ¹

ANNOUNCEMENTS of correspondence courses open to public health nurses from the Departments of Health of New York and Ohio have recently been made. The one in New York is called "the Extramural Course in Public Health Nursing," and the one in Ohio a "Correspondence Study Course." The chief aim of both of these seems to be as expressed in the Bulletin of the Department of Health of New York, which says, "There needs to be a minimum standard body of facts, with which every one of us must be familiar, if our immediate work is to count as it should" and is for "a common outlook upon a field of work, and our responsibilities and opportunities therein." In each state the emphasis is to be upon the particular state conditions, laws and programmes.

In New York the course is open not only to nurses of New York and other states, but also to any persons "who feel they may be benefited by taking it." Out of the 250 accepted registrants of this course, seven are not signed as registered nurses. This is doubtless due to the fact that the emphasis has been put upon meeting the nurses' needs and also because it is announced as a course in public health nursing. The fact that this course is open to any person without careful consideration of previous academic or professional education excludes any possibility of its being given credit or recognition in any University offering work in public health nursing.

¹Written by G. E. Hodgman and published also in *The Public Health Nurse*.

It has been distinctly stated by those directing these corresponding courses that they in no sense take the place of formal training in public health nursing. In Ohio the aim of the course is stated to be "a means of acquainting them (the nurses of the state) with the scope and limitations of laws and procedures under state local public health administration." It is in no way comparable with the work which is being done "within the walls" of the fifteen or more universities now offering postgraduate courses in Public Health Nursing. Nor can it be considered the most desirable preparation or sufficient for meeting the many and important problems in the fields of Public Health Nursing except under circumstances of proper and close supervision and direction.

A "certificate" will be granted by the Department of Health of New York State upon successful completion of the required study and one week's residence. It is perhaps the granting of this certificate that makes us a little anxious in regard to this course. The diploma of the eighth grade "graduation" which doubtless in its day stimulated many to continue their schooling until they had gained the impressive emblem has, as we know, been the stumbling block of "completed education" to many others.

It is said that the test of whether a thing is "good" or not is largely dependent upon its "leading on" qualities. That which stimulates growth, and gives the knowledge upon which growth feeds, is sure to open new vistas of interest and desire for more knowledge. A body of knowledge, even though small in amount, common to a large group makes possible a kind of intercourse within the

group which makes for growth. Common knowledge of problems, interests and aims makes for constructive team work. It is in the light of these things that we are considering these correspondence courses. If they accomplish their expressed aims, "a common outlook upon a field of work and our responsibilities and opportunities therein," they are indeed worth while.

COURAGE

WE have had many discussions, pro and con, of the flapper, the type of young woman whose psychology is so thoughtfully discussed by Miss Gregory in this number of the *Journal*. The notable thing about these discussions is that even the detractors of the young woman of today usually give her credit for possessing courage—the quality Sir James M. Barrie, in his Rectorial address¹ calls the lovely virtue—the very rib of Himself that God sent down to his children. We agree heartily with that brilliant, whimsical and wholly charming address which is so full of good sound sense, especially do we believe that the time has arrived for youth to demand a partnership, and to demand it courageously.

They will demand of nurses in vain, however, if those growing old in the service fail to recognize the glorious possibilities of youth. Youth will have received in vain if we grant the partnership and they make selfish use of it. Will their share in the partnership not be determined by the attitude of those in the field? If they find us seeking the easy way will Youth not tend to seek the easy way also? Just as Barrie says

that doubtless the Almighty could have provided us with better fun than hard work, but he does not know what it is, so does the good nurse believe that doubtless there could be a more satisfying profession than ours, but it has not yet been developed. This belief must be convincingly demonstrated to those whom we would have in partnership. Courage is inherent in the youth of the present, but it is demanded also of the generation of nurses upon which is thrown the responsibility for safely assimilating the generation that is demanding partnership. Let us not expect all the adaptation to be on the part of youth. We, too, must be courageously adaptable or the partnership will be no partnership, but a war between opposing forces. Out of the richness of our experience let us, too, develop "the lovely virtue" and with it an understanding of the psychology of youth.

THE SPIRIT OF NURSING

RECENT letters to the editor cite instance after instance of the failure of nurses to live up to the obligations they tacitly assume by becoming members of our profession. We should be in a veritable Slough of Despond if we could not recall a fund of such stories as the following, in support of the other side of the argument. A patient with advanced carcinoma of the face was admitted to a ward where the young nurses had not had previous experience with that appalling condition. Knowing this, the Director of the School said to the students in the course of her rounds: "What a dreadful condition that is. It will tax your ingenuity to the utmost to care for this patient, but *think of how*

¹Courage. By J. M. Barrie.

much more dreadful his plight would be if no one wanted to take care of him! Suppose it had happened to one of us. Think of what good nursing would mean."

That sympathetic and great hearted woman, without tritely quoting the Rule that is fundamental to all good nursing, and telling the nurses, as is so often done, that they would just have to do the best they could, was able to put her own feeling for the afflicted into terms that even the most thoughtless student understood. The best effort of the supervisor was put forth in demonstrating the nursing care and it became a matter of pride on that ward for nurses to vie with each other in devising ways of lessening the misery of the patient.

So long as such women direct our schools the true spirit of nursing cannot die, for their graduates will go out imbued with ideals of service that cannot be quenched by contact with a materialistic world. When the Slough threatens to engulf us we recall the fact that there is a high percentage of such women in our schools, even though we must admit that there are some misfits in nursing, just as there are some square pegs in the round holes of every other profession. The spirit of nursing is a living force! It is not easily nor frequently demonstrated on the printed page, but it is the deathless power that animates the lives of thousands of women who are quietly and unostentatiously helping to make this world a better place to live in.

"There are trees which are of great service just because they are beautiful."

Ethics of the Trees, Dresslar.

POSITIVE HEALTH SERIES

The Woman's Foundation for Health is composed of sixteen member organizations, such as the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the National Federation of Business and Professional Women's Clubs. Their conception of health is described as "something positive, progressive, dynamic. It is not merely a vague and negative state of being which remains after active illness has subsided. It stabilizes and enriches life, and no effort is too great that helps to win it." The six attractive and valuable pamphlets which may be obtained for \$1 from the office of the Foundation, 43 East 22d Street, New York City, were prepared by writers of authority in the health field on such subjects as The Health Examination, The Health of Adolescent Girls, Mental Health in Relation to Bringing up Children, Recreation, and the Physiology of Reproduction.

Married nurses no longer professionally occupied sometimes ask how they can serve their communities. Securing a wide use of these pamphlets is one answer to their question.